



Community Outcomes (SCORE) Fact Sheet

The 'Data Exchange' reflects the two-way partnership of information sharing between funding agencies and organisations, enabling both to find smarter and more efficient ways of improving service delivery and the overall outcomes achieved for individuals, families, and communities.

One of the key principals of the Data Exchange is **Data collection will focus on client outcomes**. Instead of focusing solely on numbers (e.g. how many people used a service), the Data Exchange has been designed to capture outcome information which can tell a story about how communities use a service and what changes for them by accessing the service.

The Data Exchange partners with funding agencies and organisations to support better use of data in gaining insights about client and community outcomes. Organisations participating in the partnership approach use the Data Exchange's streamlined system to report outcomes data on their services. Outcomes data is collected using SCORE (Standard Client/Community Outcomes Reporting).

Community outcomes are achieved in different ways and progressively over different periods. They range from immediate short term outcomes to longer-term changes that positively affect the circumstances of a community.

1. What is Community SCORE?

Community SCORE reflects changes that may occur through the provision of large group or community engagement work. The Community SCORE is linked to four domains that reflect changes that may occur for a group or community rather than individual clients:

- **Group/Community knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours** for a group of clients or community members participating in the service (where it is not feasible to record the changes for individual members of the group or community)
- **Organisational knowledge, skills and practices** to better respond to the needs of targeted clients or communities.
- **Community infrastructure and networks** to better respond to the needs of targeted clients and communities.
- **Social cohesion** to demonstrate greater community cohesion and social harmony.

Outcomes are the changes that happen because of the services you provided to your clients. Outcomes differ from the activities or actions of the service, which are known as 'outputs'. Please refer to the [Measuring outcomes: a beginner's guide](#) for more information on outcomes.

An outcomes framework is a tool that helps you link what you are doing to what you want to achieve for your clients. It can help you work out how you will measure progress towards the change you are hoping to see in your clients.

This guide will explain these concepts and provide practical steps you can take to better measure Community SCORE's in your own organisation's context.

SCORE is client focused and measures the reasons why the client accessed services, and then measures the impact of those services on client outcomes.



2. Why is it important to measure a Community SCORE?

Funding agencies are increasingly interested in hearing about service delivery outcomes. They want to understand what has changed for clients because of services they have received.

Once you are clear on what change you are hoping to see in your clients, you need to focus on what you can measure. Measuring outcomes gives you the evidence of what has changed for your clients over time.

By focusing on what you can measure, and by recording outcomes data, you can:

- demonstrate the positive changes you are making to people's lives;
- prioritise and allocate resources where they are most needed or can make the most difference, and modify your service delivery as needed; and
- know that you are making a difference to your clients and the community.

The Data Exchange streamlines outcomes reporting and shares information back with organisations to help them continue to improve the way they deliver their services. This 'data exchange' plays an important role in developing new social policy initiatives for the future and in evaluating the impact of community programs.

3. How are Community SCOREs measured?

Organisations use a diverse range of instruments and methods for measuring and assessing client and community outcomes, often linked to organisational and sector specific priorities. The SCORE tool used in the partnership approach allows organisations to measure outcomes using existing validated tools, but report them through SCORE to be captured in a consistent and comparable way.

The way Community SCOREs can be recorded into the Data Exchange is flexible, and allows organisations various ways to record their community outcomes to fit around their service delivery model. We have designed the Community Outcomes report to demonstrate the different methods, which organisations use to report Community SCORE.

Note – some SCOREs recorded may fit into each of the three ways of displaying Community SCOREs, and there may be overlaps.

a) Un-paired SCORE

SCOREs are recorded and treated as stand-alone assessments, regardless of whether another SCORE has been recorded as part of a Case or Session pair. These are displayed in the unpaired SCORE sheets, and will include all recorded Community SCORE assessments (including all Session pairs, and Case pairs).

Example: An organisation hosts a one-off community event such as a music/art festival with the goal of building social cohesion for the community. At the end of the event, a Community SCORE rating of social cohesion is recorded for the event to indicate the community outcome.



b) Session pairing

A Session pairing is where an organisation measures and records at least two assessments for the same domain within the same Session. These are reported in the Session Pairing SCORE sheets.

Example: An organisation hosts a community event with the goal of building social networks for a community group. The organisation records a rating for the group at the beginning of the event against community infrastructure and networks. Towards the end of the event, the organisation records a second rating for the same domain based on the event's proceedings.

c) Case pairing

A Case pairing is where at least two assessments exist for the same domain within the same Case (whether they are paired within the one session, or different sessions within that case). These are reported in the case pairing SCORE sheets.

Example: An organisation hosts a recurring community event, such as a monthly barbeque with a goal to improve the attitudes and behaviours for the community.

Each time the barbeque is held, the organisation records a rating for the group at the end of the event against community knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours.

4. Accessing your Community SCORE data via Data Exchange reports

The better the quality of the data you record, the more insights you can gain into the outcomes of your clients. Data and insights are valuable tools that you can use to make changes or adjustments to improve the service you provide to your clients and their communities.

To help you check your data quality, as well as analyse and interpret this information, you can access a number of interactive reports via the 'MyDEX Reports' button in the Data Exchange.

- All organisations can access the Data Exchange 'standard reports', which reflect the 'priority requirement data' collected.
- The expanded 'partnership reporting' suite is available to those organisations that provide additional data focused on their clients' outcomes.
- Go to the [Data Exchange Training](#) web page for step-by-step instructions on how to navigate the reports.

The Community outcomes report shows the SCOREs being reported by organisations for group or community activities where it is not feasible to record changes in outcomes for individual clients. This report can be used to:

- analyse the average Community SCORE over time;
- see the shift between earliest and latest SCOREs over time; and
- display how outcomes can vary between program activities or across outlets.



5. Glossary

Glossary Term	Definition
Activity	The activity that organisations are funded to deliver. Activities fall under Programs. Clients can access multiple activities.
Case Pair	A Case pair is where at least two Community SCOREs exist for the same domain (i.e. an earliest and a latest) within either the same, or different Sessions under the same Case.
Cases	Cases includes all cases where a client or support person session are attached. A case is a grouping of clients and sessions created to reflect that they are receiving a common service from an organisation. This may reflect individuals, couples, families or a set of unrelated individuals.
Community SCORE	Changes in group, organisation, and community capacity to address identified needs.
Delivery Organisation	Organisations delivering services directly to clients. These organisations may receive funding directly or through a Lead Organisation.
Domain	Domains are unique to each outcome type. For Community SCORE there are 4 domains.
Outlet	The location from where a service is primarily being delivered. Each outlet is assigned the program activities which it will deliver.
Paired domains	A domain is paired when at least two SCOREs exist for the same domain (i.e. an earliest and a latest).
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statement
Program	The Portfolio Budget Statement line item program that the report is displaying results for. This reflects the schedule in the grant agreement.
SCORE	Acronym for Standard Client/Community Outcomes Reporting.
Session	An instance of service delivery during the reporting period which had one or more clients in attendance.
Session Pair	A Session pair is where two Community SCOREs exist for the same domain (i.e. an earliest and a latest) within the same Session.
Un-paired SCORE	An instance of a Community SCORE assessed as a standalone assessment regardless of whether it is also part of a Case or Session SCORE pair, or a single SCORE with no pairing.
Un-paired SCORE - % Communities with an overall limited positive outcome	A community outcome is rated as limited positive when the average SCORE for all domains is greater than 1, but less than or equal to 3.
Un-paired SCORE - % Communities with an overall moderate to significant positive outcome	A community outcome is rated as moderate to significantly positive when the average SCORE for all domains is greater than 3.
Un-paired SCORE - % Communities with an overall positive outcome	A community outcome is rated positive when the average SCORE for all domains are greater than a score of 1.
Un-paired SCORE - % Communities with no change	A community outcome is rated as having no change when the average SCORE for all domains is 1.



6. Further reading

Please discuss any questions around measuring outcomes with your funding arrangement manager. You can also seek technical assistance from the Data Exchange [Helpdesk](#).

Data Exchange resources

- **Data Exchange [Protocols](#)**: A practical guide outlining reporting requirements for each program. Of particular interest in relation to outcomes are:
 - Section 6: Collecting 'partnership Approach' data;
 - Section 7: Recording client and community SCOREs.
- **Protocols [Program Specific Guidance](#)**: policy guidance on entering data into the Data Exchange in a consistent way that best reflects the program activity being delivered; assistance on SCORE outcomes and partnership data collection; support for consistency in reporting within program activities, and in the interpretation of the Protocols across funded organisations.
- **Fact sheets** related to measuring outcomes and providing high quality data:
 - [A partnership approach to reporting outcomes](#)
 - [SCORE - at a glance](#)
 - [How to use SCORE with clients](#)
 - [The importance of data quality](#)
 - [Measuring outcomes - a beginners guide](#)
 - [SCORE Translation matrix](#) common clinical tools
 - [Information for organisations about consent](#)
- **Practical step-by-step instructions**:
 - [Task cards and e-Learning modules](#) on the Data Exchange website
 - Recorded webinars, via the Webinar library on the [training](#) page

Other useful resources

There are also many interesting and expert materials online, if you are looking to learn more about outcomes measurement and evaluation.

A good place to start is the following booklet, which provides a wealth of information in plain language: "[Making sense of evaluation: a handbook for everyone](#)" which was published in 2017 by the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu) in New Zealand.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies has an [information hub](#) for evidence, resources and support for professionals working in the child, family and community welfare sector.